

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 03221 01 OF 03 240013Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MEXICO 03221

DEPT PASS NASA FOR EARTH RESOURCES LAB, SLIDELL, LA.

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, MX
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - REMOTE SENSING SYSTEMS

REF: (A) STATE 40426; (B) STATE 44307

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING MEETINGS WITHIN EMBASSY ON ADVANCED AND INTERIM SENSING SYSTEMS PROPOSED REF (A), FULL BRIEFING WAS GIVEN TO FERNANDO BAEZA, OFICIAL MAYOR OF ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, WHO SEEMED RECEPTIVE TO REQUESTS AND UNDERTOOK TO SEEK NECESSARY GOM CLEARANCES. PENDING OUTCOME OF HIS EFFORTS, EMBASSY HAS NOT SUBMITTED FORMAL REQUEST FOR AIRCRAFT CLEARANCES OUTLINED IN REF (B). END SUMMARY.

2. ON MORNING OF FEBRUARY 21, WAYNE MOONEYHAN (NASA) AND JOSEPH LINNEMANN (STATE S/NM) BRIEFED CONCERNED MEMBERS OF NARCOTICS COORDINATING COMMITTEE, CHAIRED BY CHARGE, ON DETAILS OF ADVANCED AND INTERIM REMOTE SENSING SYSTEMS, AND ON IMMEDIATE NEED FOR FIELD TESTS WITH NASA LOW-LEVEL AIRCRAFT, GROUND TRUTH, AND NASA U-2 OVERFLIGHT. NARCOTICS COMMITTEE AGREED THAT EMBASSY SHOULD PURSUE ALL NEEDS WITH ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE SOONEST.

3. MOONEYHAN AND LINNEMANN, ACCOMPANIED BY EMBASSY
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PAGE 02 MEXICO 03221 01 OF 03 240013Z

NARCOTICS OFFICERS, CONDUCTED TWO-HOUR BRIEFING FOR BAEZA ON ALL ASPECTS OF BOTH SYSTEMS, CONCLUDING THAT WORK HAD NOW REACHED POINT THAT GOM ASSISTANCE WAS REQUIRED. BAEZA WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT UTILITY OF ADVANCED SYSTEM AND TRAINING VALUE OF INTERIM SYSTEM, AND SAID HE WOULD PERSONALLY SEEK APPROVAL OF SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE AND FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR OVERFLIGHTS AND GROUND TRUTH TO

BEGIN IMMEDIATELY. HE ASKED THAT WE PROVIDE HIM, IN SPANISH, BRIEF SUMMARY OF PROGRAM AND OUTLINE OF SPECIFIC NEEDS, WITH EMPHASIS ON TYPES OF AIRCRAFT AND NUMBERS OF US PERSONNEL INVOLVED.

4. EMBASSY HAS DELIVERED TO BAEZA SPANISH TRANSLATION OF FOLLOWING PROGRAM SUMMARY:

I. ADVANCED CROP DETECTION SYSTEM

THE ADVANCED CROP DETECTION SYSTEM UTILIZES AN ELECTRO-OPTICAL MULTISPECTRAL SCANNER WHICH RECORDS THE RELECTED LIGHT ENERGY IN FIVE DISTINCT REGIONS OF THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC SPECTRUM. IT IS DESIGNED TO OPERATE AT AN ALTITUDE OF 40,000 FEET AND THE PREFERRED PLATFORM IS A LEARJET MODEL 35 OR 36. UNDER OPTIMUM CONDITIONS THE SYSTEM HAS A CAPACITY OF COVERING APPROXIMATELY 30,000 SQUARE KILOMETERS PER FLIGHT, ASSUMING FOUR HOURS OVER THE TARGET AREA, WITH DATA ANALYSIS REQUIRING 48 TO 72 HOURS. IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE DATA PROCESSING SYSTEM WOULD BE BASED IN MEXICO CITY, AS WOULD THE SYSTEM'S LEARJET.

- SYSTEM WOULD BE CAPABLE OF DETECTING POPPY IN ALL STAGES OF GROWTH, AND, UNDER OPTIMUM CONDITIONS, SHOULD IDENTIFY FIELDS AS SMALL AS ONE-FIFTIETH (0.02) OF A HECTARE.
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PAGE 03 MEXICO 03221 01 OF 03 240013Z

- SYSTEM WILL PERMIT CALCULATION OF TOTAL POPPY ACREAGE WITH AN ACCURACY OF 85 PERCENT, AND SHOULD COVER THE MAJOR POPPY PRODUCTION AREAS ONCE EVERY 21 DAYS.

- SYSTEM CAN BE USED TO VERIFY POPPY DESTRUCTION.

- SYSTEM CAN BE USED TO IDENTIFY OTHER LICIT AND ILLICIT CROPS, USING THE SAME DATA TAPES BUT INCREASING THE DATA PROCESSING TIME.

- AIRCRAFT AND DATA PROCESSING FACILITY WOULD BE OWNED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO AND OPERATED BY APPROXIMATELY 15 MEXICAN PERSONNEL, INCLUDING AIRCREW, DATA PROCESSING TECHNICIANS AND ANALYSTS. UNTIL THE SYSTEM IS PERFECTED IT WOULD REQUIRE APPROXIMATELY EIGHT U.S. TECHNICIAN/ADVISERS WORKING WITH THEIR MEXICAN COUNTERPARTS.

- SYSTEM SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR FIELD TESTING IN MEXICO ON JANUARY 1, 1980, AND SHOULD BECOME OPERATIONAL BY MARCH 1, 1980.

CURRENT STATUS:

THE DESIGN PARAMETERS FOR THE ADVANCED ELECTRO-OPTICAL SCANNER HAVE BEEN ESTIMATED. HOWEVER, THE HIGH COST OF THE SCANNER (APPROXIMATELY U.S.\$ 750,000) AND THE LONG LEAD-TIME FOR PROCUREMENT (18 MONTHS) REQUIRE THAT THESE PARAMETERS BE CONFIRMED BY ACTUAL FIELD TEST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA) CAN VERIFY THESE PARAMETERS IN THREE DAYS OF TESTS USING A NASA AIRCRAFT AND DATA PROCESSING FACILITY WHICH ARE IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE. IF THIS TEST CAN BE PERFORMED NOW, THE ADVANCED ELECTRO-OPTICAL SCANNER CAN BE ORDERED IN TIME TO MEET THE JANUARY 1, 1980, SCHEDULE. THE TEST WOULD REQUIRE:
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 MEXICO 03221 01 OF 03 240013Z

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 03221 02 OF 03 240021Z
ACTION SNM-05

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 MEXICO 03221

- THREE DAYS OF FLIGHT TESTS USING A NASA BEECH E-18 AIRCRAFT WHICH WOULD BE BASED IN CULIACAN AND FLY OVER CONFIRMED POPPY FIELDS AT ALTITUDES RANGING FROM 4,000 TO 12,000 FEET. THE AIRCRAFT, WHOSE REGISTRATION IS "NASA 948", WOULD HAVE TWO US PILOTS, ONE US EQUIPMENT OPERATOR, ONE US SCANNER MAINTENANCE SPECIALIST, AND ONE US PROJECT ENGINEER. IN ADDITION TO THE FIVE-CHANNEL ELECTRO-OPTICAL SCANNER, THE AIRCRAFT CARRIES A 9-INCH FORMAT CAMERA WITH A 6-INCH LENS TO CONFIRM AIRCRAFT LOCATION. IT IS HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO WOULD DESIGNATE AN OFFICIAL TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL OF THESE FLIGHTS AND THEN RETURN WITH THE AIRCRAFT TO

SLIDELL, LOUISIANA, TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESSING AND EVALUATION OF THE DATA TAPES IN A NASA LABORATORY AND TO BRING COPIES OF ALL TEST RESULTS WITH HIM WHEN HE RETURNS TO MEXICO.

- THE POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION OF APPROXIMATELY 30 POPPY FIELDS BY EXPERIENCED MEXICAN AND US PERSONNEL, COLLECTING THE TYPE OF INFORMATION OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED GROUND TRUTH FORM. AFTER IDENTIFICATION, EACH FIELD MUST BE SECURED AGAINST ANY CHANGE UNTIL THE ABOVE-MENTIONED TEST FLIGHTS ARE COMPLETED. GROUND TRUTH COLLECTION WOULD PROBABLY REQUIRE FIVE TEAMS OF ONE EXPERIENCED MEXICAN AND ONE EXPERIENCED AMERICAN IN EACH TEAM, PLUS MILITARY PERSONNEL TO SECURE THE FIELDS AND SUFFICIENT ROTARY-WING AIRCRAFT TO TRANSPORT THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MEXICO 03221 02 OF 03 240021Z

TEAMS AND THE MILITARY PERSONNEL. THIS PORTION OF THE PROGRAM SHOULD REQUIRE NO MORE THAN ONE WEEK.

- SINCE THERE ARE NO APPROPRIATE MAPS AVAILABLE FOR THE TEST AREA, ONE OVERFLIGHT BY A NASA HIGH-ALTITUDE AIRCRAFT TO ACQUIRE IMAGERY BY WHICH THE ELECTRO-OPTICAL TEST AIRCRAFT CAN NAVIGATE ACCURATELY. THIS AIRCRAFT, A NASA-OPERATED U-2 WITH NASA REGISTRY 56-6682 AND CALL SIGN "NASA 709", REQUIRES SPECIALIZED GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT NOT AVAILABLE IN MEXICO AND WOULD THEREFORE TAKE-OFF AND LAND AT TUCSON, ARIZONA. AS THIS AIRCRAFT HAS ONLY ONE SEAT, A MEXICAN OFFICIAL CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN THE FLIGHT ITSELF. HOWEVER, IT IS HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO WILL DESIGNATE AN OFFICIAL TO BE PRESENT IN TUCSON FOR THE TAKE-OFF AND LANDING, TO HELP UNLOAD THE AIRCRAFT WHEN IT RETURNS AND TO ESCORT THE DATA OBTAINED TO THE NASA PROCESSING LABORATORY IN AMES, CALIFORNIA, FOR PROCESSING AND EVALUATION. IT IS HOPED THIS OFFICIAL WILL PARTICIPATE IN ALL PHASES OF THE DATA PROCESSING AND BRING COPIES OF ALL MATERIAL WITH HIM WHEN HE RETURNS TO MEXICO.

II. INTERIM CROP DETECTION SYSTEM

WITH THE ABOVE-DESCRIBED TESTS COMPLETED AND THE ADVANCED SYSTEM HARDWARE ORDERED, 18 MONTHS WILL ELAPSE BEFORE DELIVERY. DURING THIS PERIOD, THE TECHNIQUES FOR DATA ANALYSIS, AS WELL AS OPERATING PROCEDURES AND TRAINING OF PERSONNEL, CAN PROCEED USING A FIVE-CHANNEL ELECTRO-OPTICAL SCANNER AND DATA RECORDING SYSTEM WHICH NASA IS PREPARED TO LOAN TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO DURING THE PERIODS NOVEMBER 1978 TO MARCH 1979 AND NOVEMBER 1979 TO MARCH 1980. THIS EQUIPMENT WOULD BE PLACED IN A

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 03221 02 OF 03 240021Z

GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO AIRCRAFT WHICH WOULD FLY AT APPROXIMATELY 25,000 FEET TO DUPLICATE THE RESOLUTION THAT WILL BE OBTAINED FROM THE ADVANCED SYSTEM SCANNER. A BEECH E-18 AIRCRAFT WITH TURBOPROP ENGINES IS RECOMMENDED FOR REASONS OF ECONOMY, PAYLOAD, ENDURANCE, AND ALTITUDE CAPABILITY. IT COULD BE USED FOR PASSENGER/CARGO TRANSPORT WHEN THE ADVANCED SYSTEM IS OPERATIONAL.

THE INTERIM SYSTEM WOULD ALSO INCLUDE A DATA PROCESSING SYSTEM WHICH WOULD BE ASSEMBLED IN MEXICO CITY FOR ANALYSIS OF THE DATA IN ORDER TO PROCEED WITH TECHNIQUE DEVELOPMENT, PROCEDURE DEVELOPMENT, OUTPUT FORMAT DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS. ALL EQUIPMENT USED IN THE INTERIM SYSTEM, EXCEPT FOR THE NASA-OWNED SCANNER, WOULD BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO.

THE INTERIM SYSTEM WOULD REQUIRE ONE SCANNER MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN, ONE SYSTEMS OPERATION TECHNICIAN, FIVE COMPUTER HARDWARE/SOFTWARE TECHNICIANS, AND ONE PROJECT LEADER, FOR A TOTAL OF EIGHT US ADVISER/TECHNICIANS WHO WOULD WORK WITH THEIR MEXICAN COUNTERPARTS IN OPERATING THE SYSTEM ON A SINGLES SHIFT BASIS. SOME OF THESE ADVISER/TECHNICIANS WOULD DEPART WHEN THE ADVANCED

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 03221 03 OF 03 240038Z

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 03 OF 03 MEXICO 03221

SYSTEM ARRIVES IN MEXICO AND THEIR MEXICAN COUNTERPARTS, TOGETHER WITH THE MEXICAN OFFICIAL WHO WORKS WITH NASA IN THE UNITED STATES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AD-

VANCED SYSTEM, WOULD FORM THE NUCLEUS OF THE MEXICAN
TEAM OPERATING THE ADVANCED SYSTEM WHEN IT BECOMES
FULLY OPERATIONAL. THOMPSON

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